IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

APPLICATION FOR LETTERS PATENT

CONCEALABLE POCKET FLAP APPARATUS AND METHOD

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ATTORNEY'S DOCKET NO. 46401.0056

CONCEALABLE POCKET FLAP APPARATUS AND METHOD

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates to outdoor clothing, and more particularly to a concealable pocket flap for outdoor clothing.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Outdoor clothing for the shooting and hunting industry is increasingly becoming more sophisticated. Recent clothing designs are intended to address the various needs of consumers. In particular, outdoor clothing is increasingly being designed to address the functional needs of consumers.

Clothing designed for use in connection with shooting sports, both recreational target shooting and sport hunting, is being designed to focus more specifically on the needs of the consumers. Various types of shooting vests and other outdoor clothing have been designed, for example, to pad the shoulder of the person discharging the firearm, to maximize warmth, yet reduce bulk, and to store ammunition. Ammunition storage becomes important when the user of the firearm needs to access quickly and efficiently extra ammunition once the ammunition held by the firearm is completely discharged.

Numerous articles of clothing and clothing systems have been developed to allow the consumer to store ammunition in a location that is both practical and easily accessible.

One problem with clothing having ammunition storage systems is that they are generally only practical for firearm usage activities. For example, today it may not be practical or desirable to walk into a restaurant with a vest full of exposed shotgun shells.

Thus, a vest that provides for ammunition storage in a traditional manner may be practical only for a very specific type of use.

In view of the foregoing, there is a need to develop outdoor clothing to provide an appropriate ammunition storage system that can alternatively be exposed and available for use in the field or concealed when the clothing is worn among the general public. Still further, there is a need to provide an ammunition storage system in combination with outdoor clothing that is versatile and meets the needs of the shooting enthusiast.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention involves a concealable pocket flap apparatus that can be moved between an exposed position and a concealed position. The pocket flap apparatus further includes one or more ammunition retaining receptacles for releasably securing firearm ammunition. The flap apparatus can be positioned inside a pocket to conceal the flap and ammunition receptacles, or the flap can be positioned outside the pocket to provide convenient access to the ammunition. The concealed configuration of the flap allows the item of outdoor clothing, to which the flap apparatus is attached, to be used as general outerwear, and not exclusively for shooting sports.

A first embodiment of the pocket flap apparatus includes a pocket having front, rear, and side pocket walls that form a partially enclosed space or pocket with an opening on the top. A cover is attached to the rear pocket wall such that it can be used to cover the top opening of the partially enclosed space formed by the pocket. An ammunition flap is also attached to the rear pocket wall below the cover adjacent to the top opening of the partially enclosed space. The ammunition flap can be positioned to expose the ammunition

receptacles on the flap, or positioned to conceal the flap inside the pocket. Therefore, the pocket flap apparatus can be used on an outdoor garment so that it can be used both for shooting sports and related activities and for general use.

The foregoing and other features, utilities, and advantages of the invention will be apparent from the following detailed description of the invention with reference to the accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is a front view of a garment including a pocket flap apparatus in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention, with the flap shown in an exposed position;

Fig. 2 is a front view of the garment from Fig. 1, with the flap shown in a concealed position;

Fig. 3 is a perspective view of a pocket flap apparatus in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention, with the flap shown in an exposed position;

Fig. 4 is a perspective view of the pocket flap apparatus of Fig. 3, with the flap shown in a concealed position;

Fig. 5 is a sectional top view of the pocket flap apparatus taken along the line 5-5 of Fig. 3, showing the flap in an exposed position;

Fig. 6 is a sectional top view of the pocket flap apparatus taken along the line 6-6 of Fig. 4, showing the flap in a concealed position;

Fig. 7 is a sectional side view of the pocket flap apparatus taken along the line 7-7 of Fig. 3, showing the flap in an exposed position; and

Fig. 8 is a sectional side elevation view of the pocket flap apparatus taken along the line 4-4 of Fig. 4, showing the flap in a concealed position.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Reference will now be made to the drawings to describe presently preferred embodiments of the invention. It is to be understood that the drawings are diagrammatic and schematic representations of the presently preferred embodiments, and are not limiting of the present invention, nor are they necessarily drawn to scale.

The present invention relates to a pocket flap apparatus for holding ammunition that can be alternated between an exposed position and a concealed position. The pocket flap apparatus includes one or more receptacles for releasably securing firearm ammunition, such as shotgun shells, cartridges, or the like. The flap can be positioned inside the pocket to conceal the flap and the ammunition receptacles or positioned outside the pocket to provide convenient access to the ammunition. The concealed position of the flap allows the garment, to which the pocket may be attached, to be used for general purposes, rather than for shooting sports only. Also, while embodiments of the present invention are described in the context of an apparatus for releasably securing ammunition, it will be appreciated that the teachings of the present invention are applicable to other applications as well. For example, the flap can be configured to releasably secure any type of hunting or outdoor accessories and remain consistent with the spirit of this invention.

Figs. 1 and 2 illustrate a garment including a pocket in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention; the garment is designated generally at 100 and the pocket is designated generally at 200. Although the illustrated garment 100 is a jacket,

those skilled in the art will understand that the pocket 200 may be attached to any garment including but not limited to pants, shorts, shirt, vest, jacket, poncho, sash, cape, etc. The garment 100 includes a hood 105, a pair of sleeves 110, and a torso section 115. The pocket 200 is positioned on the lower right portion of torso section 115 of the garment 100. Fig. 1 illustrates the pocket 200 in an exposed position and Fig. 2 illustrates the pocket 200 in a concealed position. The illustrated pocket 200 further includes a cover 205, a flap apparatus 215, and a front pocket wall 225. The flap 215 includes holders or receptacles 220 configured to releasably secure firearm ammunition. The receptacles may be made of any suitable material, including but not limited to cloth, elastic material, or a combination of both. Although the illustrated receptacles 220 are configured to releasably secure firearm cartridges or shotgun shells, any type of receptacle may be positioned on the flap in accordance with the present invention.

The exposed position of the pocket 200 illustrated in Fig. 1 is designed to provide convenient access to the receptacles 220 on the flap. Firearm users generally must reload their firearms after discharging all rounds in the firearm to shoot again. For example, if an individual is duck hunting with a shotgun and manages to attract a large number of ducks to a particular area, the individual may wish to fire more shotgun rounds than are available in the magazine and chamber of the shotgun. Further, any time the shooter discharges the firearm, the shooter generally wishes to reload the chamber and/or magazine rapidly given the limited ammunition storage capacity of the firearm. Therefore, by providing convenient access to additional ammunition, the individual is able to reload the firearm much more rapidly. The holders 220 also secure the ammunition in a convenient and safe manner.

The concealed position of the pocket 200 illustrated in Fig. 2 is designed to conceal entirely the ammunition retainers or receptacles 220 from view. By concealing the receptacles 220, the garment 100 to which the pocket 200 is attached can be used for general purposes. In addition, in the concealed position, the ammunition that is releasably secured within the retainers 220 is also protected from elements to which the external side of the garment 100 may be exposed. By concealing the flap 215 inside the pocket 200, the garment 100 can be used for multiple applications, including shooting sports and general usage.

Figs. 3 and 4 illustrate a more detailed view of the pocket 200 as compared to Figs. 1 and 2. The pocket 200 includes a cover 205 with a fastening mechanism 210, such as a snap, a flap 215 with a plurality of holders or retainers 220, a front pocket wall 225, a side pocket wall 235, and a rear pocket wall 230. The cover 205 is a flap-like structure designed to cover the top opening of the pocket formed between the front, side and rear pocket walls 225, 235, 230. The cover 205 is secured at its top side to the back pocket wall 230. The top opening formed by the pocket walls 225, 235, 230 is only accessible when the flap 215 is in the concealed position as shown in Fig. 4. The cover 205 also prevents debris and other unwanted materials from inadvertently falling into the pocket through the top opening. The cover 205 includes a fastening mechanism 210 for releasably securing the cover to the front pocket wall 225 when the flap 215 is in the concealed position shown in Fig. 4. Alternatively or in addition, the securing mechanism 210 may be used to secure the cover 205 to the flap 215 when the flap 215 is in the exposed configuration. By securing the cover 205 to either the front pocket wall 225 or the flap 215, the cover 205 is prevented

from flapping up in an unwanted manner. Still further, the contents within the pocket 200 are less likely to fall out of the pocket 200 if the cover 205 is secured to the front wall of the pocket in this manner. For example, if the flap 215 includes a fastening mechanism and the cover 205 is fastened to the front pocket wall, the ammunition stored within the upper row of retainers 220 is prevented from inadvertently falling out from the retainers 220 if the garment 100 wearer bends over while wearing the garment.

The front, side and rear pocket walls 225, 235, 230 form a partially enclosed space that has a top opening. The front and rear pocket walls 225, 230 are flat pieces of material that are simply positioned on top of one another. The side pocket wall 235 is a single piece of material attached to the left, right and bottom sides of the front and rear pocket walls 225, 230. The side pocket wall 235 is folded in an accordion manner such that the pocket 200 can either be flat or extended outward to contain various materials. The shape of the side pocket wall 235 is shown in more detail with reference to Figs. 5 and 6.

The flap 215 is secured to the back pocket wall 230 under the cover 205. As described above, the flap 215 can either be positioned outside the pocket 200 in an exposed configuration or inside the enclosed space formed by the pocket walls 225, 230, 235 so as to conceal the flap 215 and allow the pocket 200 to be used in a normal manner. The flap 215 includes a plurality of retainers or receptacles 220 that are configured to releasably secure firearm ammunition. The retainers 220 can be configured and arranged in any suitable manner and remain consistent with the present invention. When the flap 215 is in the concealed position, the flap 215 is folded into the enclosed space and positioned between the front and rear pocket walls 225, 230. Whereas, when the flap is in the exposed

position, the flap 215 is allowed to lay flat on top of the front pocket wall 225 in the manner shown in Fig. 3.

Figs. 5 and 6 illustrate sectional views of the pocket 200 shown in Figs. 3 and 4. Fig. 5 illustrates the flap 215 positioned in the exposed position consistent with the pocket shown in Fig. 3. The flap 215 is shown positioned on the outside of the front pocket wall 225. The accordion style side pocket portions 235 are also shown clearly in these figures. Fig. 6 illustrates the flap 215 positioned in the concealed position consistent with the pocket shown in Fig. 4. The flap 215 is shown between the front and rear pocket walls 225, 230.

Figs. 7 and 8 illustrate sectional views of the pocket 200 shown in Figs. 3 and 4. Fig. 7 illustrates the flap 215 positioned in the exposed configuration consistent with the pocket shown in Fig. 3. Fig. 8 illustrates the flap 215 positioned in the concealed position consistent with the pocket shown in Fig. 4.

While this invention has been described with reference to certain specific embodiments and examples, it will be recognized by those skilled in the art that many variations are possible without departing from the scope and spirit of this invention. The invention, as defined by the claims, is intended to cover all changes and modifications of the invention which do not depart from the spirit of the invention. The words "including" and "having," as used in the specification, including the claims, shall have the same meaning as the word "comprising."